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SENATE MEMORIAL 27

**48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007**

INTRODUCED BY

Dede Feldman

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

A MEMORIAL

CREATING THE YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CONTINUUM WORK GROUP.

WHEREAS, thriving children and families make New Mexico strong, and supporting their well-being is key; and

WHEREAS, a robust economy requires an educated workforce and investing in New Mexico's children is investing in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, school success means higher levels of education, employment and home ownership and further translates to lower incidence of crime, drug abuse, unemployment and poverty; and

WHEREAS, school readiness of young children is a key strategy for ensuring school success and closing the achievement gap to make sure that children start school fully developed, healthy and prepared; and

WHEREAS, the most significant period of a person's brain

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1 growth and development occurs in the first five years with  
2 major "windows of opportunity" through age six; and

3 WHEREAS, developmental conditions identified early in life  
4 are easier and less costly to address; and

5 WHEREAS, economists at the federal reserve bank of  
6 Minneapolis have determined through research that investment in  
7 early childhood programs produces an annual rate of return of  
8 sixteen percent;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
10 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that a young  
11 children and families continuum work group be appointed to  
12 develop recommendations to improve access to services for  
13 families, improve the lives of their children and set a  
14 foundation for school and personal success; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the group be appointed equally  
16 by the chair of the children's cabinet and the chair and vice  
17 chair of the legislative health and human services committee,  
18 with the consent of the speaker of the house of representatives  
19 and the president pro tempore of the senate, and include a  
20 diverse group of no more than sixteen persons representing the  
21 early childhood action network; child health and development,  
22 mental health, early care, education and human services  
23 community providers; advocates, businesses and faith  
24 communities; the media; academia; and child development  
25 research fields; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the group include family  
2 representatives and members representing the cultural, ethnic,  
3 economic and geographic diversity of the state and have  
4 knowledge and experience of the health, mental health,  
5 education and social needs of young children birth to age eight  
6 and their families; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the group make priorities for  
8 investment over the next three years to strengthen a  
9 comprehensive statewide early childhood system to address the  
10 following areas: family involvement and family support;  
11 physical and mental health; early learning; child safety; and  
12 transition from early childhood to school; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the group make recommendations  
14 on a continuum of services to better coordinate and link  
15 components of a comprehensive system; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the group report its  
17 recommendations to the legislative health and human services  
18 committee by the November 2007 meeting of the committee; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
20 transmitted to the children's cabinet.